

twitch
plays
OMEN



Vol. 42
Issue 3

DANGER ZONE:

GRACE WILLEY - The part in Enchanted where Amy Adams gets really excited about the fact that she is angry.

JONATHAN GARDNER - We should replace everyone with robots.

ISAIAH MANN - Selfless compassion

B CORFMAN - LOML

F. STEWART-TAYLOR - All. Every. Every single one. Every single one individually and specifically.

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu or Jonathan Gardner, Box 1203.

Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.



Front cover by Jonathan Gardner

Back cover by F. Stewart-Taylor

Assorted text snippets submitted by Gabriella Oddo

EDITORIAL

Jonathan Gardner

Look! I'm writing an editorial in advance this time! Look at how responsible I am! (It is also about 3 in the morning and I should definitely be writing a paper instead.)

So I don't know about the rest of y'all, but I've been closely monitoring the progress of Twitch Plays Pokemon, hence the cover of this issue. For those who haven't heard of it, it's a livestream of Pokemon Red hooked up to a chat where you can input commands. So if you type "up" into the chat, you move up! The twist is that there are usually somewhere around 100,000 people doing this at once, so it looks more like a screaming two-year-old mashing buttons at random rather than anything resembling an actual playthrough. Or 100,000 screaming two-year-olds all trying to mash the same buttons at random. (The fact that they're screaming is very important to the analogy.)

As of the writing of this editorial, they've managed to complete the entire game in just over 16 days, which as far as I'm concerned is goddamn inspiring. And they had a surprisingly solid team, too, including a Zapdos that they somehow managed to catch with a Master Ball. The best part of it, though, is this elaborate mythology that evolved (pun completely intended. fight me.) out of this whole thing, which equates the Helix Fossil to a god. For those of you who've forgotten (or for those of you who never played Pokemon in which case this is probably even more of a waste of time to you), the Helix Fossil eventually becomes this thing:



(I WAS BORN TO DANCE)

Other highlights include Bird Jesus the Pidgeot, the mass exodus of Pokemon that came with the capture of Zapdos known as Bloody Sunday, and the saga of

the false prophet Flareon. It's incredibly silly (and probably kind of obnoxious to people who don't care), but I find it completely hilarious, so whatever. They're starting Pokemon Crystal afterwards, and while it might be fun, I don't know if they can recapture the magic that made the first one so special.

When you really think about it, though, isn't Twitch Plays Pokemon a lot like The Omen? It's a platform where everyone's voice is heard, where everyone can have an impact. A crucial impact. An impact that can change everything. You probably won't. But it's possible. Anything is possible.

Not really.

Other stuff that's going on: in the near future, we'll be putting a digital archive of past Omens up online for your perusal. We will also be giving out free, *vintage* Omens that we have way too many copies of, so if you're interested, feel free to just ask for one! Seriously. We have SO MANY OF THEM. Just take them off our hands. Please.

But more relevant, just as Pokemon started in black and white before adding color, so too will the Omen! That's right, next issue is our color issue! Everything you've come to love about the Omen, but in FULL COLOR. So if you've got stuff you want to submit in color, now would be the right time to submit it to omen@hampshire.edu. And if you feel like going the extra mile, you could also come to the next layout meeting on March 13th, at 8pm in the Omen office, which is located in the Merrill A basement. You can eat Chinese food and yell about things with us, it'll be super rad.

-Jonathan "I care more about Pokemon than I care about most other things" Gardner

(BUT SERIOUSLY IF YOU HAVE A 3DS AND WANT TO PLAY POKEMON WITH ME. HIT ME UP.)

SECTION: SPEAK

asdf;hr2f3g

by Connor Doyle

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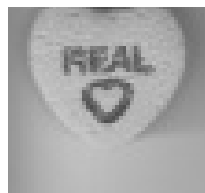
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^ B Corfman

**COLOR ISSUE IS COMING
SUBMIT YOUR COLORFUL COLORY COLORS AND
ART AND STUFF
AND THINGS IN BLACK AND WHITE WE'LL STILL
PRINT THOSE TOO
-jgardz**



^ B Corfman



^ B Corfman

An Outline of Why The Mod Lottery System Sucks

Jesse Ide

In an attempt to make the mod lottery less of a miserable stressfest, me and B decided to start planning our modgroup super early. In trying to plan an actual mod lottery group rather than just relying on ID-based housing again, I've come to find that this system of deciding who lives where is possibly the worst system one could conceive of. At most colleges, there are just dorms, and people lottery as individuals. It's a matter of choosing the party-dorm or the sub-free dorm, the dorm by the dining hall or the dorm by the building your classes are in.

On-Campus apartments make it more important who you're living with, though. You'd think that having us lottery as groups would help people live with who they want to live with but really it all just falls flat on its face. Here's a list of ways that the lottery system is horrid.

It's basically just a system that puts Div IIIs in mods together and then puts everyone who can afford it back into the dorms; and everyone with less money or more need for privacy into Greenwich (where there won't actually be much more privacy). And Greenwich is really really terrible living conditions. So everyone wants to live in Enfield & Prescott but the system is designed to prevent you from doing it.

It's all awful. Of course it's unreasonable to expect the housing office to do like with the incoming students and ask everyone their preferences, but there needs to be a way to house people based on their preferences and not their points and popularity. If someone is antisocial that shouldn't doom them to the dorms or Greenwich or god forbid 10-person mods.

1. **Your points are worthless until your last lottery when suddenly you can live wherever you want**
2. **There is no incentive to ever group with someone who has less points than you**
3. **Forming groups is based around knowing tons of people**
4. **And knowing that they have compatible living styles and housing preferences with you and each other**
5. **And being able to navigate all of everyone else's interpersonal drama before inviting anyone to join the mod group (such as if someone's ex is someone else's current partner)**
6. **And not hurting anyone's feelings by not inviting them to your mod group**
7. **And the fact that only people in their last lottery have any value means you can't live with people from your own year until your last lottery but nobody in their last lottery has any incentive to live with you**
8. **So basically you have to be so likable that people are willing to sacrifice their chances of getting a good mod by having you in the group**
9. **So you have to know tons of people and be on good terms with them all and be confident in asking them about mod stuff**
10. **And those people can't be from the category of people you're most likely to know well**
11. **Meanwhile most of the stuff you're focusing on has nothing to do with your housing preferences**

The system used at most other campuses involves a random number generator which is weighted to give people better numbers for seniority. They even have people enter as groups, but with the numbers being generated only after the groups have entered. By essentially point-blinding people, they are more free to live with those who they have similar housing preferences with. When your number comes up, you see which mods/houses/halls are left and simply pick one of the remaining. Then you have it. Some have you pick 6 and you get one of them. Yes, our "lottery" is semi-random for which mod you get but when our points are fixed it's really more like each mod having a fixed cost.

Anyway, if you have 6+ points, you're queer/trans-friendly, into living in a space that's socially calm, very clean, sub-lite (that is, alcohol but not other substances or smoke indoors), and consider yourself to be a rad person who is into communal living (sharing chores, regular mod meetings, responding to each other's requests, etc.) then you should contact me at jci12@hampshire.edu. Don't let the 12 deceive you. If we get a 6th person to join our group who has 6 points then we will have 35 points, which is the average cost of a 6 person mod in Enfield. That's because everyone else in the group has shittons of points and the only reason I'm in it is because I'm socially outgoing enough to glue together people who don't know each other.



DELIVERY

a short play by

ISAIAH MANN

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

EVERETT, 28 smoking jacket

LUCY, 31 shawl

QUILLA 23 scarf

MARCO, 40 deliveryman

SCENE

A couch is positioned upstage right. An overturned stool rests downstage center, directly behind EVERETT.

AT RISE

LUCY rests on the couch, upstage right: sprawled lazily across it. EVERETT stands downstage-center glowering through the back of his head at her. MARCO and QUILLA are offstage left.

LUCY

I said—

EVERETT

I know what you said, that doesn't mean I'm happy about it.

LUCY

I didn't ask you to be happy, I just asked you to forgive me.

EVERETT

(pacing around the stool)

I don't expect that will happen.

LUCY

Then could you get out of the apartment?

EVERETT

I don't see why that's necessary.

LUCY

I'm not particularly interested in having—

EVERETT

Well at this moment, my particular interest is standing here, and sitting on this stool.

LUCY

I think those two are mutually exclusive.

EVERETT

That's more than I can say for the two of us.

LUCY

I'm not entirely sure you know the meaning of "mutually exclusive."

EVERETT

Oh, please enlighten me, what does "mutually exclusive" mean to you?

LUCY

Well, it means that two things cannot—

EVERETT

Because to me, it means that we don't sleep around on each other.

LUCY

Once again, you clearly don't—

EVERETT

How can you just lay there and talk back to me like this.

LUCY

Possibly because I'm trying to relax.

EVERETT

Really? Because I think it's more due to apathy.

LUCY

You think I'm being apathetic?

EVERETT

No, I think you were being apathetic when you slept with her.

LUCY

Well, do you have any proof of that?

EVERETT

Apart from the act itself?

LUCY

Yes, how do you know I wasn't incredibly concerned with your reaction in each and every moment?

EVERETT

I assume that would have given you a bit more pause.

LUCY

How did you know I didn't pause?

EVERETT

I've had enough of your dribble.

LUCY

Then leave.

EVERETT

(propping the stool back up and sitting on it)

No.

QUILLA

(entering timidly)

Is now a bad time?

EVERETT

(nearly falling off his stool)

Ostensibly.

LUCY

Baby, I asked you to come over later.

QUILLA

You said 3:00.

LUCY

But you know I always mean 15 minutes later than I say.

QUILLA

Well, I'm all the more on time then.

EVERETT

(picking up his stool, walking over to QUILLA and sitting back down)

I demand you leave at once.

QUILLA

No.

LUCY

You see how annoying that is: refusing to leave when asked, Ev?

EVERETT

This is my house, and this is just some floozy you had a tryst with.

QUILLA

It was more than one tryst, guy.

LUCY

Maybe not the best tactic, Quil.

EVERETT

Young lady—

QUILLA

You're five years older than me.

EVERETT

How could you possibly know that?

LUCY

Maybe I told her.

EVERETT

How dare you give away my personal information to this—

QUILLA

(brushing past EVERETT)

Mind if I sit with you?

LUCY

(sliding over on the couch)

Not at all.

EVERETT

I've had it with the two of you.

LUCY

Then get out.

EVERETT

(shifting in his stool)

I refuse to vacate the premises.

QUILLA

Your name's not even on the lease, you cheap—

LUCY

Quil, don't call him out on his career.

EVERETT

I'll have you know; I'm a very successful—

QUILLA

Car salesman?

EVERETT

Automobile Correspondent.

LUCY

Ev, there's nothing wrong with selling cars.

EVERETT

I'm well aware of that, I don't need you to remind me.

MARCO

(entering)

Hey, I've got a delivery for a Mr. Slipso here.

QUILLA

(sitting up with mirth)

Honestly, Slipso?

EVERETT

What business is it of yours?

MARCO

Because I'm supposed to delivery this package to an Everett Slipso.

EVERETT

I was talking to this floozy.

MARCO

(glancing over at QUILLA and LUCY)

Which floozy?

EVERETT

(standing up off his stool)

My girlfriend is no floozy, sir!

MARCO

Which one is which though?

EVERETT

How dare you, you—

LUCY

(disentangling herself from QUILLA and getting up)

Oh, Ev! You're actually standing up for my honor. That's so sweet of you.

EVERETT

(looking over hopefully)

Really?

LUCY

(pulling out her wallet)

No. Hey, how much can I pay you to deliver my boyfriend to the street corner.

MARCO

\$9.50.

LUCY

\$7 even and Twix.

MARCO

(taking the money and the Twix)

Deal.

EVERETT

You've forgotten one crucial piece of the puzzle, I'm not—

(MARCO scoops EVERETT up around the waste and hefts him offstage left)

LUCY

Sorry about that.

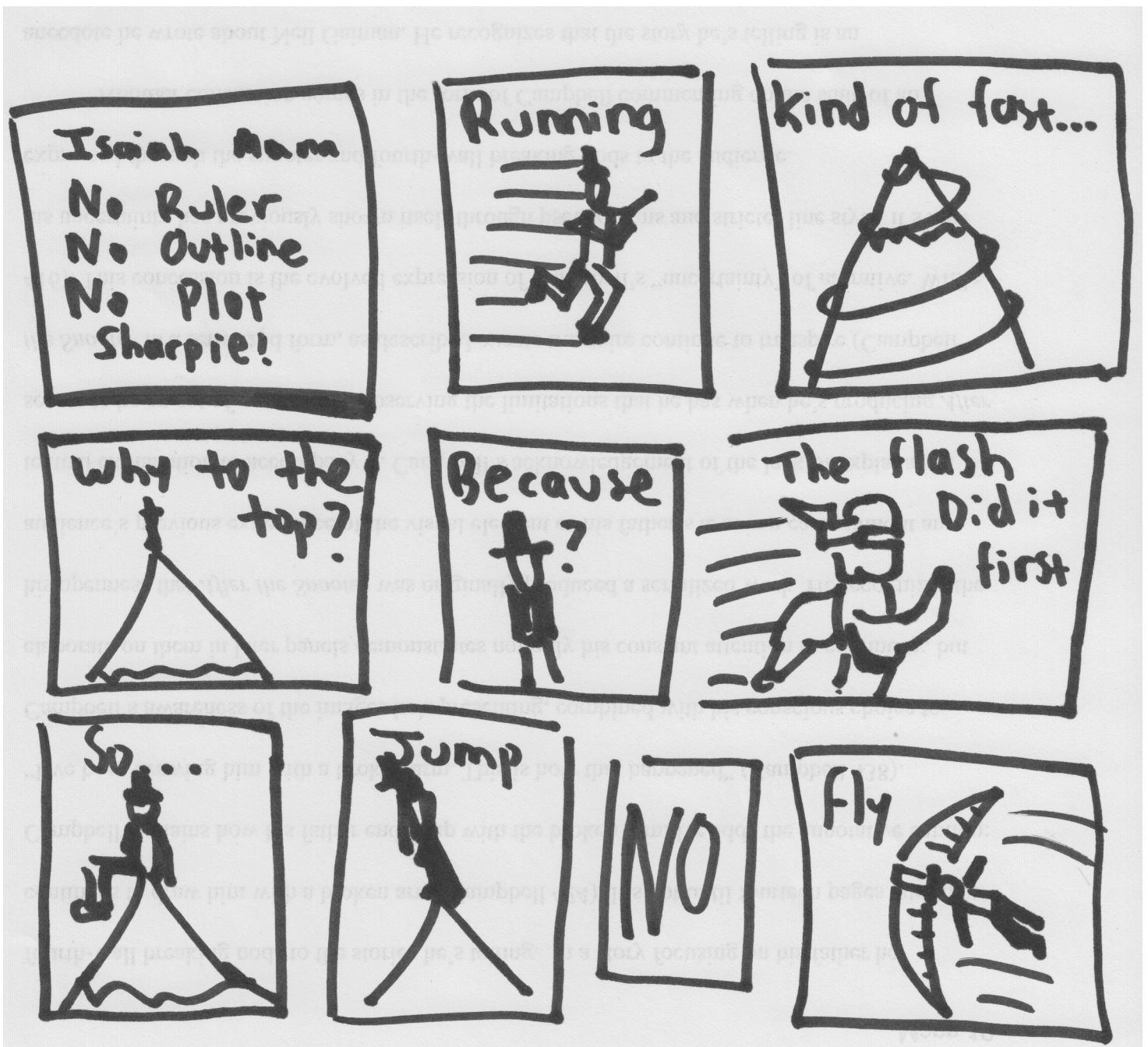
QUILLA

Hey you just had a man bodily lifted out of your apartment for me.
That's awesome.

LUCY

No honey, I just bodily had a man lifted out of the apartment for us.

(LUCY settles back on the couch. Lights down)



Grace Willey





And suddenly, he was
unsure what to draw

Do penguins
have
tails?
No...

This is
the
back
of his
essay

And then
he realized

Sharpie has
limited artistic
potential.

Much
like the
submitter:
[Isaiah Mann]



Dreaming by Gabriella Oddo

"Will you be here when I wake up?"

"Nah. I'm sorry."

The answer was always the same. When Atlus was lucky enough to be aware of his dreams, they always ended in that unfortunate question. Or at least, that part came somewhere near the end. He couldn't really keep track.

"That's alright... I should know better, by now." Atlus sighed, letting it out through his nose. He looked down. "I ask you this every time, don't I?"

"Yeah. But it's alright." Mikael laughed, brushing some of Atlus's hair away from his eyes. "You can see me now, right? This is pretty close to the real thing. If you dream hard enough, you can feel it too."

"Mikael, you don't really 'dream hard'." Atlus smiled, reaching out with a hand to touch the golden strands that laid across the sheets. Mikael's hair was so beautiful. Atlus could've sworn he was touching strands of sunlight, finer than the space between window shades that morning rays peek through, so soft and shining, still warm. So beautiful. His hands burned with wanting.

"Sure ya do." Mikael let him do that, closing his eyes. "Or at least, you do." he opened his eyes again, exhaling a little. "Is this what you're thinking about, when you're not reading or something on that stone wall at lunch?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do you think about me?"

e: * The eel flops around.

i see what u mean

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"Uhm..." Atlus could feel heat swelling in his cheeks. It was too real for a dream. "Well... yes. I do."

"Why don't you just, y'know. Talk to me?" Mikael laughed. "I don't bite."

"I know that. But you've always got other people to talk to. Just because I met you once before doesn't mean I'm your new best friend."

"Who said that?" Mikael bumped his nose gently up against Atlus's. "Just you."

"Yes... just me." Atlus smiled faintly. "Just like this conversation right now... it's just me."

Mikael frowned, moving away. He sighed, sitting up a little and leaning on his elbow. "You really do spend more time cryin' than tryin'. It's a shame. Don't you know how to have fun?"

"Of course I do, but... I mean... have I really earned it, yet?"

"What is this, the friendship olympics? Don't be ridiculous." Mikael cracked a smile, laying back down next to him. "Just try, okay? I'm always listening, y'know. And like I said, I don't bite."

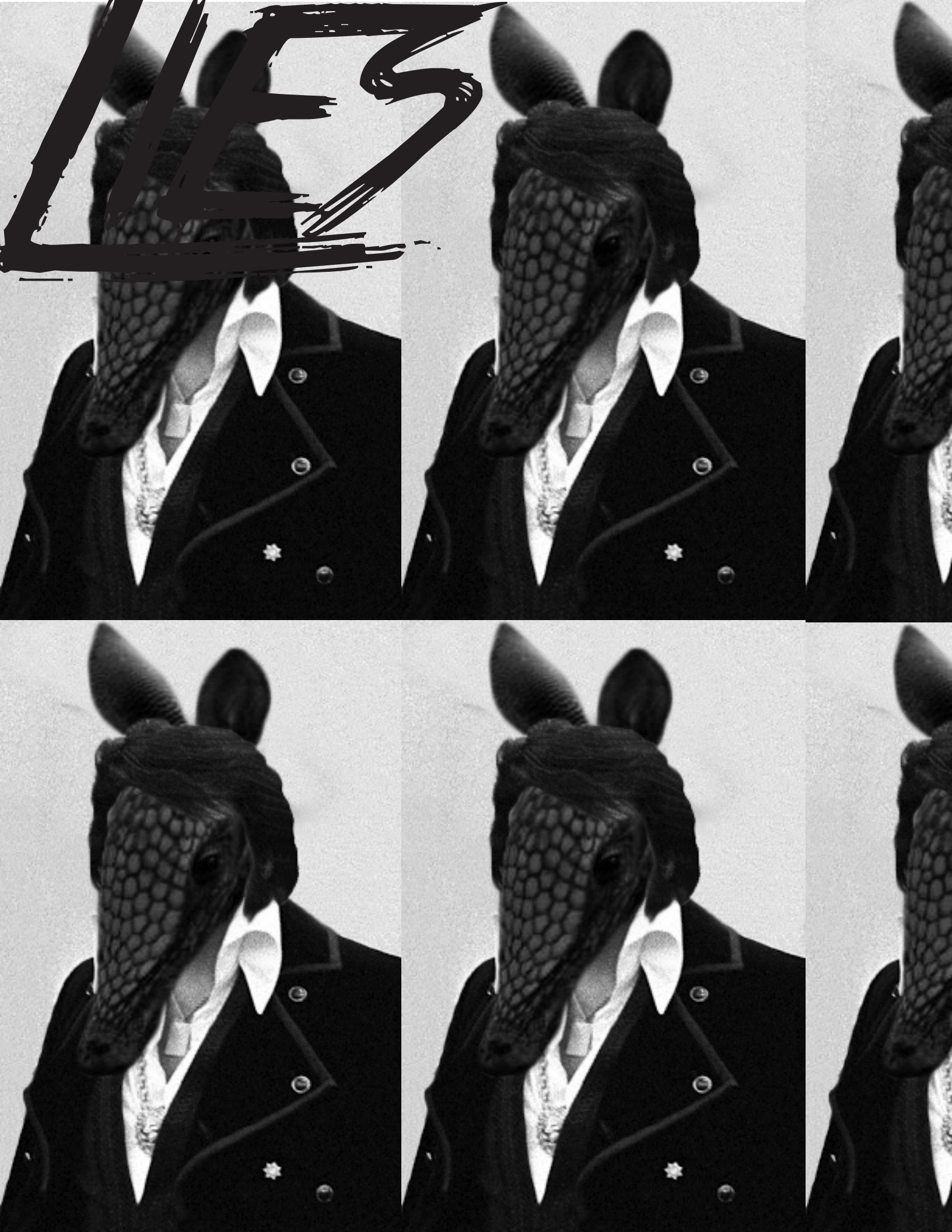
"Okay." Atlus smiled a little. "I'll ah... I guess I'll try."

"Good." Mikael leaned in and kissed him softly on the cheek. "You never really know, Atlus. Sometimes, yeah, it's the wrong time to try talking to someone... but those times are obvious. If you're not sure, just go for it. Do it anyway. The worst they're gonna do is decline."

"Right... you're right."

Atlus felt a lightness in his body, a rising feeling. A push upward from the heaviness of sleep. He knew what that meant. "I'll see you tomorrow, Mikael."

"Yeah. Seeya 'round."







SECTION: HATE

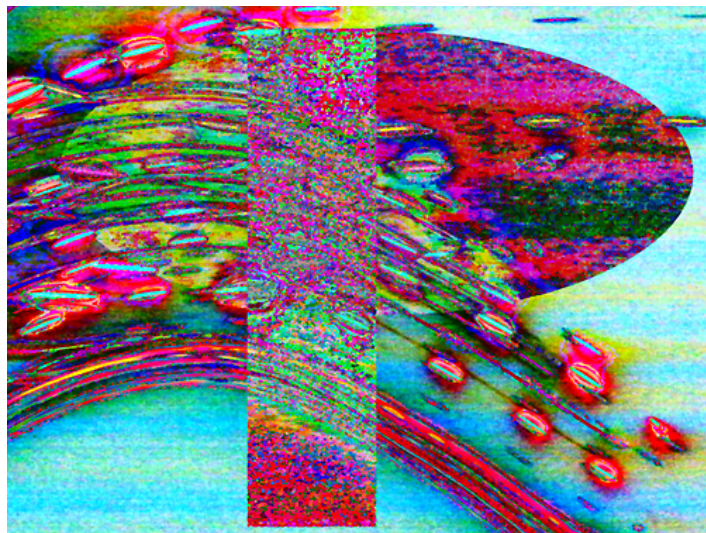
The first attachment is a picture of what happened when I morphed JLash's face with Ryuk's from the live action Death Note film, then morphed a separate image of JLash and Benedict Cumberbatch's faces, and THEN morphed those two together (both RyukLash and CumberLash respectively), and morphed the final result with the same picture of Ryuk again. It's terrifying. Sorry in advance. If this causes you to need some kind of body horror trigger in the beginning of the magazine, I'm also sorry for that, and you don't need to include it. But if you put the text from this email in there to describe the effort that went into this process, I think people might get a laugh out of it. Or both, if it floats your boat.



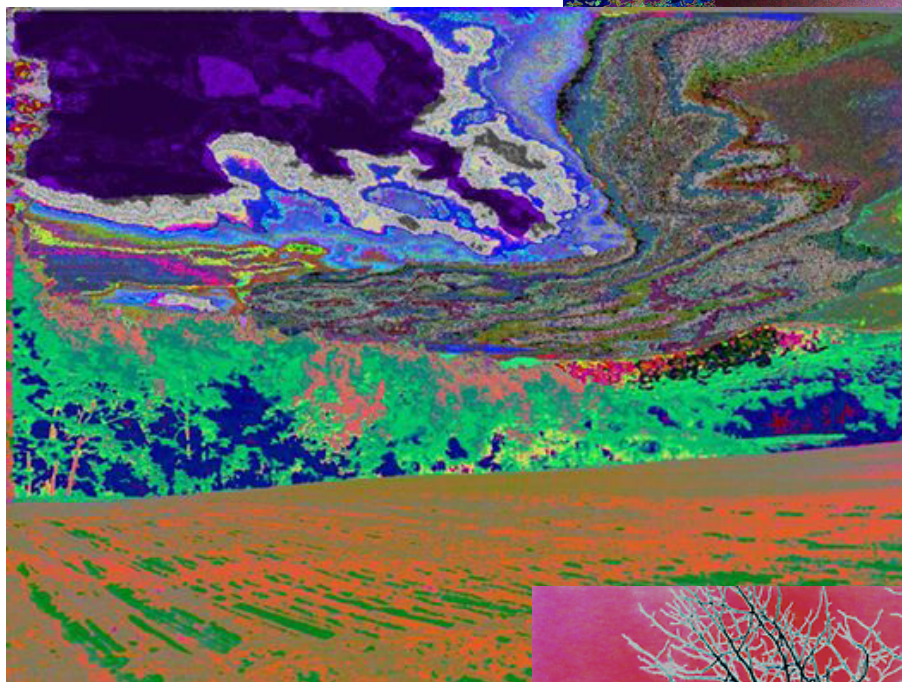
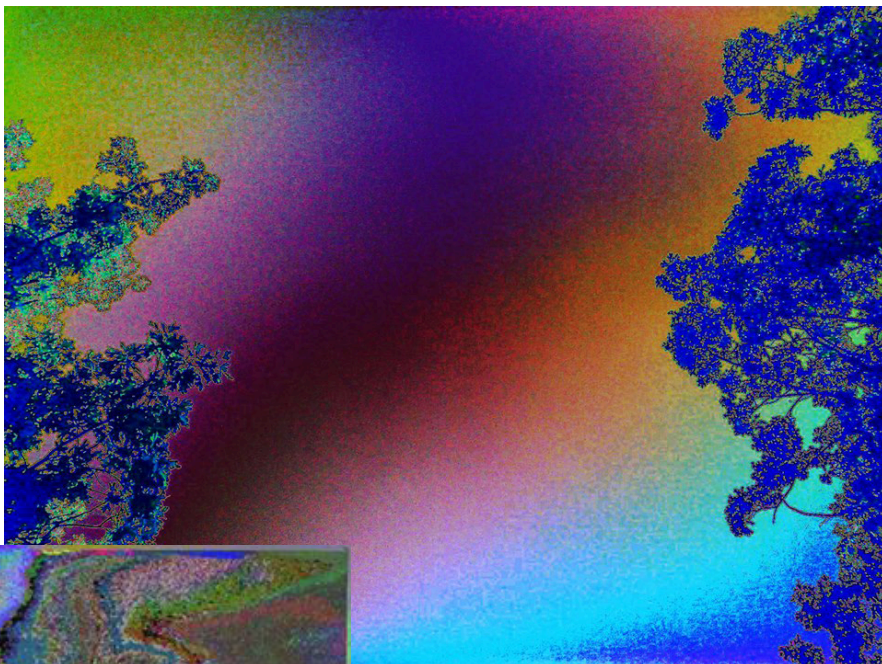
◀^Gabriella Oddo

Neal Sanger

v



Neal Sanger: "These are all my
original work,
and I have all rights to them."



54th Massachusetts

By Rob Carroll

How splendid, and in arrogant step
How sleek the column comes
With upturned chins and cadence kept
In time with the solemn drums

Gone now are slavish swaddling rags
We now flourish in Army blue
Cotton bags are now musket and flag
And pitiful slaves now a soldierly crew

We who were bound, laid low in shame
With tears aflow in hopeless eye
We, the hawks whose wings were tamed
Now proud and warlike fly!

Look on us now, slavers of past
See our brass and guns, and revile!
See justice, justice! whose colours at last
At last crown the head of our file!

What further use have your collars and chains?
What fear have we for scourges?
How can we quake with such rage in our veins?
Nor suppress our free-borne urges?

Rather it is you to tremble and quiver
And appeal to merciful God
Chill is the gale of vengeance, now shiver
And reel from our wrathful rod!

Triumph assured, for the free cannot fail
The master's whips will shrivel and break
Those it scarred shall rise and prevail
Oh Tyranny! see Freedom, and quake!

Feelings we Hate:
By Omen staff

-joy

-friendship

-trust

-love

-happiness

-whimsical delight

-malaise

-ennui

-frustration

-despair

-hope

-desire

-things that aren't robots

-things that robots don't feel (which is most things)

-stress

-self-created stress

-oh god why aren't I writing that fucking paper



Fun